

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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Topics of the Month

EVERYBODY says—and so it must be right—that the Southport Conference was one of the finest, most businesslike and successful Conferences ever held. The amazing agenda was got through, thanks to the wonderful chairmanship of Walter Smith, but thanks also to a slaughter of the innocents by the Standing Orders Committee, coupled with the good intentions and acumen of the delegates themselves in avoiding unnecessarily prolonged discussion. Nobody can now say that Labour has not got a Policy, and the next thing is to take steps to make that policy practicable by concentrating as many minds and as much effort upon the electoral organisation of the Party.

Most commentators on the Conference will, of course, mention the Socialist League, and so will we, but not to enter any controversy. The outstanding feature of the Conference was the celerity with which it came to, what the Socialist League and its opponents will both concede were, vital decisions. This very fact should be one of the consolations, and they were very few, which the Socialist League got out of the Conference. If Labour can so quickly act in Conference, does it not prove an ability, if not an intention, to act with equal dispatch when in power? We do not misinterpret the spirit of the Movement to-day when we say that we believe the whole Movement looks for rapid legislation, and the means for securing it, from the next Labour Government. We say this out of our experience among Local Parties, and this fact—it is no discovery—might well be noted, illustrated as it was by example at Southport, both by the Socialist League and those with whom it differs.

Neither the public nor the Movement ever hear much concerning the complementary conferences which accompany the Annual Conference. There are conferences of candidates, of agents, of Local Parties, staff conferences and of course E.C. meetings and confabs ad libitum. These gatherings are not in the nature of conspiracies, and indeed to some of those who must be present they are just attendant evils! However, an important purpose is served; reports are given, and activities planned, and if we may give away something of what was done at Southport in these meetings, it will not be the fault of the National E.C. or the staff if the Movement is not called upon, and brought right up against, the necessity for still further stupendous efforts between now and the General Election. The "Victory for Socialism" campaign is to be further encouraged and galvanised and made to cover all the country. Big plans have been made, and soon the Movement will hear of renewed activities and definite pressure and persuasion along new lines. Preparation for the General Election also now looms large, and a general burnishing up of Party machinery will be expected. The next two years will not be comfortable ones for sluggards and dead-weights in the Movement. But they will be bonnie times for those eager for "Socialism in our time."

Complaints have again reached us concerning the widespread circulation by some Local Parties of draw tickets throughout the country. We fear that our friends who act in this manner, and who invite other Parties or individuals in other parts of the country to partake in their sales, do not appreciate some of the considerations which weigh in this matter in other places, nor the fact that Head Office of the Party definitely discourages this practice. In the first place, are our

friends aware that draws are illegal, and that though police in most parts of the country take no action, there are other places where the police are active, and where trouble quickly ensues? The distribution of draw tickets in the manner described is the most certain means of securing uniform action among the police, for police complaints from one quarter to another where indulgence is allowed, will lead very soon to universal prosecutions. Further, the distribution and sale of draw tickets by persons in all parts of the country unknown to the promoters, must inevitably lead to many sales not being properly accounted for, and to discredit falling as a consequence upon a Local Party, in no wise concerned in the matter, owing, however, to the defalcations taking place in its area. From the standpoint of those Parties into whose constituency draw tickets are sent, objection also has to be raised to the exploitation by other Parties of local resources. To our knowledge draw tickets have been sent to various supporters in certain Parties, and when these supporters are asked to partake in some effort on behalf of the Local Party they have declared that they are already selling tickets for a Party one hundred miles away. We protest that this thing is not fair, and we appeal to those Parties guilty of the practice to weigh up the considerations we have set out up above.

On the general question as to whether Local Parties ought to indulge in draws and sweepstakes in those areas where these things may be done with immunity, we have to say that we are not amongst those who, in a capitalist system, where all business is a chance, hold up their hands in holy horror at the prospect of someone receiving a handsome reward in a game of chance. That attitude seems to us to be altogether hypocritical. On the other hand, we do not favour the idea of Local Parties running draws and sweepstakes simply because we believe the aim of Socialists is to impart a nobler impulse than that of personal gain, or gain without labour. What other movements may do or what individuals may do in this respect, outside the Labour Party, is a private matter; we ourselves would have no objection to receiving first prize in an Irish

Sweepstake! But to associate games of chance with a Movement aspiring to better things is a contradiction. It denies our ideals, and if, as is becoming more and more likely, the police make a swoop, we shall not readily be able to put ourselves right in the eyes of many people. There is the further point that there are lots of opportunities of raising money that are not open to the same objections. After all solid membership and Socialist conviction renders these things altogether unnecessary.

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SUFFER THE WE RETURN TO THE ATTACK LITTLE CHILDREN

Our article under the above heading in last month's issue has already aroused considerable interest. We want it to do more.

At the Southport Conference we were approached by a number of persons interested in the same subject, and the prevailing opinion appears to be that earnest thought must be concentrated on this question during the coming year, and that those who have the matter at heart must come together at an early date to discuss the subject, and all its pros and cons.

Had there been time and opportunity we had in mind a sort of informal convention that might have been held at Southport, where an interchange of views could have taken place. The matter, however, was not raised in time for any general announcement to be made, but during the ensuing year we hope that our readers will interest themselves in this matter and possibly a gathering might be arranged on the lines indicated above.

We want again to make it clear that we have not in mind, at any rate at present, the setting up of any separate machinery for catering for children. Our present purpose is solely to direct the mind of the Movement to the fact that children are being left by us to the mercy of other influences, most of them antagonistic to Labour, and that the mind of the child is moulded long before Labour seems to think it worth while to cater for the budding citizen.

This fact we believe accounts for the comparative failure of both the industrial and political wings of Labour to attract the youth of the nation. Despite all that is done by the League of Youth, the fact remains that this movement is not a shadow of what it should be, and that both the Labour Party and the Trades Unions are fast becoming middle-aged movements.

It is all very well to blame the war for the loss of a generation, but that is only one factor to explain our failure. If the facts are looked fully in the face it will be found that others have succeeded where we have failed, and that they have found the key to

the situation among those of school age.

People who say that we ought not to begin to inculcate our teaching until the individual is able to reason for himself or herself, simply ignore the lesson of modern politics. Politics are no longer the creed or plaything of a minority of the population. So completely have times changed that every aspect of life is to-day influenced by politics, and from the cradle to the grave this influence is to be felt. Politics to-day are as much a part of one's every-day life as eating, drinking and sleeping, and the latter condition is perhaps the only one where politics do not affect us.

In these new conditions is it wise for a great revolutionary movement to ignore the children?

Let us again state that it is not the teaching of a creed we are thinking of, but the bringing of the children within the active influence of a Movement which stands for great ideals, and a changed conception of the relationship of man to man. It is sheer blind folly to say that these ideals, and our great conceptions, must not be put before children till the age of maturity is reached, and because of some false quixotic notion we must wait until other ideals and orthodox conceptions have been implanted in their minds. It is this attitude which gives us the initial task, and often an impossible one, of eradicating the taints and tendencies that others have given.

We appeal to the Movement to think over this matter, to make a bigger attempt at child catering and to forget its follies while there is time.

In this series of articles we propose to tell the Movement what is being done in this matter already. Last month we gave an account of the "Red Falcon" Movement which has taken root in London.

Let it be clear that in giving these accounts we are in no sense committing ourselves or recommending

to the Movement this or any particular form of child organisation. We propose instead to inform our readers of these matters, and to keep an open mind until some such convention as above indicated has met and discussed the whole question.

This month we propose to say something about the Socialist Sunday Schools, but we pass no final judgment on them, though we may be permitted perhaps some passing observations.

The Socialist Sunday School Movement, as we indicated last month, has a name and method which has of itself aroused opposition, though we believe that most of the opposition has been unscrupulous, and that this Movement has been badly maligned. We may be forgiven for saying that we are not enamoured with the Sunday School idea, although the hold which this Movement has taken, and which it still maintains, gives colour to its claim to have accomplished a good deal.

The Socialist Sunday School Movement was established well over thirty years ago, and there are to-day fifty-three affiliated schools, and about another couple of dozen schools which, for various reasons, are unaffiliated. The National Secretary is Mr. D. D. Hopkinson, of 8, Springswood Avenue, Shipley, Yorks, and the President is Mrs. C. McNab Shaw, wife of Mr. Ben Shaw, who is well known to our readers as the late Scottish Secretary of the Labour Party.

This Movement publishes the "Young Socialist," a monthly journal which is priced at twopence, the editor being Mr. Cunliffe R. Pearce, of 17, Corstorphine Hill Road, Edinburgh. The "Young Socialist," while of course being devoted principally to the work of the S.S.S., also contains several pages of matter of child interest, which we unhesitatingly recommend as fitting for the consumption of the children of Labour folk, quite regardless of their contact with this Movement.

Incidentally may we say that the only other children's paper known to us which can, without fear of capitalist proselytising, be placed in the hands of the children, is the "Children's Newspaper" (weekly—price twopence), published, of all people, by the Amalgamated Press. The editor is Arthur

Mee, whose breadth of vision, large-heartedness and democratic sympathies express themselves here in a manner which we have often wondered has not got him the sack long ago. On all great questions of peace and war, internationalisation, exploitation and social questions, a fearless view is expounded which has surprised us coming from the quarter which it does.

We hope our friends of the "Young Socialist" will forgive this juxtaposition, for their brave effort stands in a different category; some day we ourselves hope to grace its pages!

Reverting to the doubt we expressed about Sunday Schools, it occurs to us that when the Socialist Sunday School Movement was launched, Sunday Schools generally were in their prime. How much of the failure of this Movement to extend generally throughout the country (it is known principally in the North and in London, and hardly exists south of Yorkshire) can be traced to the virulent attacks upon it arising out of the resentment of competition or its intrusion into the orthodox preserves of religion? Most of our readers know the wild charges that have been levelled against the S.S.S., most of which, we are satisfied, had not the slightest foundation in fact.

We think, however, it must be conceded that the reactions of a Movement so attacked would not exactly be those which would bring them any nearer to their competitors.

But this sense of competition plus a sanctimonious Sabbatarianism has, we think, dogged the steps of the Sunday School Movement all along. We venture now to suggest to this Movement that Sunday Schools are, after all, somewhat played out.

The immense change that has taken place in the habits of the people in the last twenty years has wrought havoc with church-going and the orthodox Sunday School. The Continental Sunday is with us, however much strict Sabbatarians may protest. We ourselves live on a main road and know it, and there is no spot in the wide countryside that is on Sunday without its army of invaders, young and old.

It should, however, be remembered that the Socialist Sunday Schools



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have other activities besides the school. There are week-night meetings and other enterprises. But is not this a time to consider (not lowering the flag) but changing the method? As we ourselves indicated last month, our own desires run in the direction of seeing something done for children on week-nights, and we think this because we know that Sundays are, in the greater part, at any rate in this country, an impossible day for children's functions.

And now we are afraid that we have exhausted our space for this month. We are anxious to give our readers some further information concerning the S.S.S.; to outline its precepts, its general course of teaching, the directions given to teachers, and in short to put the whole story of the little that is being done to-day for children.

But we must leave this till next month—and, we repeat, that in giving this information we are simply endeavouring to lay before our readers

all the facts concerning the vital question under discussion.

Will all our readers take note that we would be glad of information as to what is being done for children in their constituencies, and we would welcome short contributions on this subject.

CIRCULAR LETTERS

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Annual Conference of Labour Agents

The Annual Conference of the National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents was held at Southport on September 30th. Ald. J. M. Cape (Spennymoor) presided. There was an exceptionally large muster of members to discuss an unusually important agenda.

The Executive Report disclosed a year of considerable activity on the part of the Union, and the fact that the membership was remaining fairly constant. Tribute was paid to two members who had died during the year, i.e., Alderman Ada Broughton and Mr. F. J. Hopkins, the Labour Party Organiser for the Eastern Counties. The work of both these late comrades was referred to in the Executive Report, the paragraph on which was received by the members standing in token of respect.

Considerable time was devoted to a discussion of the question of part-time appointments, on which an important statement had recently been issued by the Union (which statement is obtainable by any of our readers on application). Figures were given to the Conference which showed that while a large number of part-time agents had been appointed in the country at some time or another, no less than 150 of whom had come in contact with the Union, there was hardly a single case where it could be said that the appointment had proved permanently satisfactory to the constituency concerned. The figures presented also showed that part-time agents were at the most a temporary expedient, and that in extremely few cases had the appointments lasted more than for a short period.

On the other hand, figures were presented to the Conference which entirely rebutted an unfortunate impression which has gained ground in some quarters relating to the impermanence of full-time agents. No less than 57 present agents of the Party had been in service for over fourteen years; 101 agents were in service who had served the Party for more than ten years; 47 who had served the Party from five to ten years, and there were 40 with under five years of service, the bulk of

whom had already served two, three or four years.

The Conference also received with satisfaction the intimation in the Labour Party Report that the National E.C. of the Labour Party were now recommending constituencies to increase the number of full-time agents, and to take every step towards this end.

An important item on the agenda related to a proposed Pensions Scheme for Labour Agents. The general outlines of a scheme were given by the General Secretary, and the Conference carried with acclamation a recommendation of the Executive Committee that they should be empowered to go ahead and negotiate a scheme with the Labour Party during the coming year.

Various proposals which appeared on the agenda for the setting up of a Benevolent Fund were either withdrawn or not carried.

The election of officers resulted as follows:—

President, Councillor W. Barefoot, J.P. (Woolwich).

Chairman, Alderman J. M. Cape, J.P. (Spennymoor).

Vice-Chairman, Mr. Fred Constantine (Clitheroe).

Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. H. Drinkwater.

Auditors, Mr. W. Whiteley (Ladywood, Birmingham), Mr. R. Montford (London District).

The National E.C. is elected on a basis of District Representation.

In the evening of the same day a special meeting of agents was held to meet the Chiefs of Departments of the Labour Party, and there were present Mr. Walter R. Smith, Chairman of the Labour Party; Mr. G. Lathan, Chairman of the Finance Committee; Rt. Hon. F. O. Roberts (Chairman, Press and Publicity Dept.); Mr. G. R. Shepherd (National Agent); W. W. Henderson (Press and Publicity); Miss Mary Sutherland (Chief Woman Officer); Mr. G. Grant McKenzie (Research), and Mr. Maurice Webb (League of Youth).

The proceedings of this meeting, which were private, were of a highly instructive and useful nature, and at its conclusion a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to those officers of the Labour Party who had attended in response to the invitations.

POT POURRI

We understand that the examinations in connection with the Labour Party scheme for Study and Examination are expected to take place shortly. Seventy-seven students are at present undergoing training in the subjects taken, i.e., Electoral Law and Party Organisation.

The Labour Party announce a scheme to cover the users of loud speakers with gramophone attachments in respect of composers' rights. A reduced license fee of £1 1s. has been arranged with the Performing Rights Society Ltd.

Congratulations to the North Camberwell Labour Party who have been awarded the London Labour Party's Individual Membership Trophy for 1933. East Fulham was a runner-up, while Clapham and North-West Camberwell were bracketed for third place. The trophy is to be presented to North Camberwell D.L.P. at the London Labour Party's Annual Conference on Saturday, 24th November.

Congratulations to the West Lothian D.L.P. on their great progress in individual membership. In April, 1933, the membership was 345. This year the membership is 1,700. The Agent is Mr. J. Aitken, Rowan-tree Cottage, Fauldhouse, West Lothian.

The Stafford D.L.P. have recently commenced publication of a monthly journal known as the "Stafford and District Labour News." There is a guaranteed circulation of 10,000 copies. No. 1 which is before us as we write is an admirably edited paper which is thoroughly readable throughout. Considerable energy has evidently been put into the procuring of advertisements, and the number of these portend a long and prosperous career to this newcomer. Congratulations to all concerned.

The Wallsend and District Labour Party have recently announced republication of the "Wallsend Labour News." This is an eight-page journal full of interest, and priced at one penny. The paper evidently has a capable editor, but it needs now an

energetic advertisement canvasser, for, unfortunately, even when a price is charged, Labour journals need to rely upon advertisements if they are to ensure long life.

Mr. J. Graham, agent at North-East Leeds, is shortly to relinquish his appointment to take up duties as full-time agent for the Battersea South Labour Party.

Mr. A. J. Heal, for many years full-time agent at Halifax, has now relinquished his office to take up full-time Trades Union organising work. His former colleagues will join with us in wishing Mr. Heal success in his new sphere of labour.

Our readers will regret to learn that Mr. Frank H. Edwards, formerly of Bury, and for many years agent at East Ham South, has been compelled to relinquish office owing to ill-health. A recognition of Mr. Edwards's long service to the Movement and loyalty to his comrades was recently made by the London District of the Agents' Union. Mr. Edwards has also been elected a Life Member of the Agents' Union.

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ABERDEEN SHOWS THE WAY

There have been many occasions on which the "Labour Organiser" has advised its readers that handbill or literature distribution demands variety; that the message should never be twice repeated, and that variety should be sought either by varying the colour and size of handbills, or by substituting paper for card, and by similar devices.

Unfortunately, all too few Parties indulge in systematic distributions (apart from the "Victory for Socialism" Campaign) and all too few Parties hold regular series of meetings, concerning which the necessity for variety and change would soon appear.

It is therefore with particular pleasure that we are able to bring to the notice of our readers the work of our comrades in Aberdeen.

A Propaganda Committee was set up in Aberdeen in the early months of last year, and the work of this Committee appears to have been thoroughly systematic and conducted upon lines well worth examination and copying.

During a little over twelve months a large number of meetings have been held, both indoor and outdoor, and in advertising these our comrades have invariably used cards instead of handbills. The choice of cards in place of handbills has been prompted by the fact that they are more easily carried by the distributor, and not liable to the same wastage through crumpling and that they are less likely to be screwed up and thrown away by the recipient. Further (and here appears that perception of psychology so necessary in organisation), it has proved that a card, if not immediately read by the recipient, is usually placed in some prominent position in the house, such as on the mantelshelf, where all members of the household see and read it.

Now though our friends have stuck to the one kind of medium for announcing a long series of functions, they have achieved variety by using a differently-tinted card for each occasion, and by varying both the message and the get-up on the back of the card.

We particularly draw our readers' attention to the way in which our Aberdeen comrades have got in a bit of short, pithy propaganda on the back of these cards. On another page

we reproduce matter which has appeared on four of these cards, and we regret that we have not space to reproduce the matter from all the specimens before us. These short, pithy messages are read, and distributors are warned to let the message suffice, and not to hand in bundles of leaflets at the same time.

The reverse side of the card carries an announcement of the meeting, sometimes printed, and sometimes duplicated, while in other cases a skeleton printing is employed, this being the case particularly for outdoor meetings, the particulars of which are duplicated.

Altogether we think our friends are to be congratulated upon what they have done. We understand that in about a year no less than 30,000 printed cards have been distributed, while on occasions, when there has been need for a rush, several thousands have been turned out entirely by duplicator.

A consideration that may occur to our readers is whether the cost of these cards is higher than ordinary printing. As a matter of fact, we understand that in practice this system does not cost so much as printing handbills separately for each meeting.

Large quantities of a particular type of card are printed at one time, and may serve for several meetings in different wards. It is a question of ringing the changes, for in most cases there is only a small amount of over-printing when the cards are required, and alternatively, as stated above, the local information is duplicated.

The Propaganda Committee has been able to supply these cards to the Ward Associations at the rate of five shillings per thousand. We should add that the cards are distributed by the members of the Ward Associations, one or two days previous to each meeting. Wherever possible the distributors endeavour to have a word or two with the recipients, and this is an important matter. Some cards are used for posting in shop windows, workshops, etc.

There is a further point concerning these cards to which our attention is drawn, and that is that a card, because of its limited size, cannot contain too much letterpress, there-

THE RATES "BOGEY"

DON'T BE scared by the tale that, with a Labour majority on the Town Council, public money would be "squandered" and your rates would go up.

Experience proves that where there are Labour majorities on local authorities the public invariably receives better value for its money than is the case under "Moderate" (Conservative) administrations.

Rates are kept low (and in many instances have been reduced) by the application of Labour's policy of Direct Labour, Municipal Banking, and the development of Municipal Enterprises generally.

REMEMBER ! Ten Million men died in the War to end War—and the death of each of them cost £3,500. A considerable part of this price went as private profits to Armament Firms.

During the economic crisis, the shares of Armament Firms in the United Kingdom rose on the average not less than 19 per cent. in value in the brief space of two months (Sept. to Oct., 1933). (From "Hawkers of Death," by Philip Noel Baker.)

The Labour Party stands definitely for Peace ; and, as one of the first steps towards Disarmament, proposes to abolish Private Profit (the price of blood) from the manufacture of Armaments.

MASS POWER v. MONEY POWER
LABOUR, with 371,607 individual Members and an affiliated Membership of over Two Million (official figures for 1932), is by far the largest political party in Great Britain.

Results of recent elections show that Labour's vote has been increased substantially in all parts of the country ; but, in order to maintain the present rate of progress against the Money Power and Press Influence of Capitalism (which made possible the return of the "National" Government at the last General Election), a still larger Party Membership is necessary.

If you believe in the things Labour stands for, it is your plain duty to become a member of the Labour Association of your Ward.

EACH £1 that goes to make up the British National Income is distributed thus :—

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There are approximately five drawers of wages to each drawer of salary, and nine wage and salary drawers (together) to each taker of rent, interest and profit.

The problems of poverty and unemployment can never be solved under a system where individual gain is the goal of all industry.

fore the "long-winded" epistle which is ineffective at all times, does not appear.

We are glad to note that detailed instructions are given to distributors. We note that distributors are advised that although their main efforts will be amongst those who are not definite supporters, they should not forget that those who generally vote with us are in a position to make valuable use of the message printed on the cards. Distributors are told that a few quiet well-chosen words as the card is handed over does much to drive the message home. "Here is a rather interesting problem for you" is suggested as a good introduction for one of the cards, and the distributor is advised to wind up with a message something like this, "Don't forget our next meeting; particulars are on the other side of the card. So-and-So is speaking. Hope to see you there. Good-night."

After all, little tips of this character are very useful to voluntary distributors. We recommend the propaganda card used by Aberdeen to the serious attention of our readers.

BOURNEMOUTH.

FOOD REFORM GUEST HOUSE.
Loughtonhurst, West Cliff Gardens.
Get right away from the Movement and have a holiday or rest with us. Terms from 49/- per week. Write Manager.

DOES PAYING RENT AMOUNT TO OCCUPANCY?

An interesting point arose during the recent registration sittings at Smethwick, where the registration officer held (and rightly as we think) that the mere rental of premises did not under the existing franchise confer the right to be registered unless occupancy was also proved.

The Act says "a person shall be entitled to be registered as a Local Government elector . . . if he or she is . . . on the last day of the qualifying period occupying as owner or tenant any land or premises, and has during the whole of the qualifying period so occupied . . ."

Councillor C. G. Spragg made a claim in respect of a garage at 185 High Street, Smethwick.

Mr. Spragg resides at 112, Wolverhampton Road, Warley, which is not in Smethwick. He ex-

plained that the rent book in respect of the garage provided for a weekly rental of five shillings, the tenancy being from January 1st.

In reply to the Registration Officer, the claimant said he was not actually using the garage. He had not yet stored a car at the garage; he had really been paying rent since January 1st by way of reservation.

Mr. Wakeling (Conservative Agent) said that from enquiries he had made he could not find that a claim had been made out. He could find no definite occupancy of the garage.

Replying to the Registration Officer, the claimant said that he kept nothing at all at the garage, no equipment.

On giving judgment, the Registration Officer said that it would be appreciated, of course, he had to be satisfied that there was something more than a tenancy. That alone was not sufficient. One could create a tenancy without necessarily giving occasion for a claim to a vote. There must be occupancy of premises. He would be the last to suggest that a person must always be in physical occupation of premises for residence or for business. But there must be some measure of occupancy. Up to the present Mr. Spragg had a reservation entitling him to occupancy in the future. He had to be satisfied in respect of the period for which the claim was made; there must be something amounting to constructive, if not complete, occupation. He was of opinion that reservation of premises without actual occupancy did not support a claim. He was satisfied there was a tenancy. He had to be satisfied, too, that there was a sufficient occupation which would satisfy the claim and he was afraid he must hold that the claim failed. Had the garage been occupied for a time, and then not used for a time he would have taken a different view of the matter; but inasmuch as the facts were that the premises had not been used as a garage under the tenancy, during the qualifying period, his view of the matter was that the claim must fail.

Mr. Chapman said he should be very glad if his ruling were carried to appeal, so that the position could be established. On the information before him, and on the law, as he conceived it to be, he was bound to hold the claim did not succeed.

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MORE ABOUT SOCIALIST WEEKS

ABOUT AN UP-TO-DATE PLAN AND ITS PLANNERS

Our readers will recollect that in our issue of last November we printed an article on "How to Organise a Socialist Week." The article outlined the plans which were adopted by the Clarion Youth Campaign to organise a Socialist Week at Fulham, and the results showed that 119 new adult members had been made for the Party, 41 new League of Youth members, in addition to which nearly 1,500 pamphlets were sold and 15,000 leaflets distributed.

The splendid work done at Fulham has been followed up in other constituencies, and we have pleasure in again giving extracts from a report of these Socialist Weeks, from which it will be seen that in most places phenomenal success has attended the efforts of our young comrades.

We hope our readers will turn to our November issue and note the methods which were adopted at Fulham. The methods adopted in other places are similar, but there are variations as will be seen from the matter below, where the whole plan of organisation is fully explained. The Clarion Youth Campaign Committee want to know whether *you* want a "Socialist Week" in your Division? If so a communication to the Organiser at 24, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1., will set the wheels in motion to the great good of Socialism and to the great joy not only of the Clarion Campaigners, but of all good Socialists locally.

General Procedure.

Following the decision of the executive of a party to hold the week, a meeting of *all* individual members of the party is called, and the plans outlined. From such a meeting is generated the enthusiasm for the work, and it has been found that an appeal from *outside* the local party at this meeting has proved most effective. From this meeting of members have been found volunteers to keep committee rooms open, steward meetings, run canteen and carry on canvassing. Most of our Socialist weeks have been carried out by an organiser and a small committee of five or so.

Headquarters.

This has depended on local circumstances. Where party premises are on a main road, no further steps need be taken. At Fulham premises were lent by the T. & G.W.U. in the main road, a hoarding 11 by 6 ft. placed in front and floodlit at night.

Brentford and Chiswick rented two shops in the main road of each district and plastered them with posters and streamers, with a window show of literature (which sold well to the passing public) and these were also floodlit at night.

At Bristol we had a central committee room, and a room for each ward. Special headquarters are not necessary, but very helpful. To the general public it means activity and initiative, to the party members there is psychological effect in getting away from old premises and doing something new, and the publicity effect of a committee room in the busiest centre of the division is obvious.

Publicity.

In each division, we have sold flags of the party colours to members and supporters to wear on coats, etc., in the usual flag-day style. These can be obtained from Messrs. Watsons, Lillie Road, Fulham, S.W., at 12s. per 1,000, in one or two colours. In each "Week" we have made a profit on the cost, and the wearing of the flags creates public interest.

These flags must not be sold in the streets.

Window Bills and Posters have been displayed by Party members in their windows with, for instance, the slogan "Bristol East Socialist Week. Join the Labour Party."

Poster Parades on foot or cycles are an effective and cheap method of attracting attention. This means double-crown size cardboards, back and front of the individual, with special posters or the standard ones supplied by Transport House.

Special press representatives are appointed for the "Week" who send reports to local papers. An advertisement in local papers of the week's

activities often obtains more consideration for news reports submitted.

During some weeks we had the use of a loud speaker for announcing the Socialist Week, and time and place of meetings. Use of a loud speaker after 8.30 p.m. antagonises people and can do a great deal of harm.

Meetings.

In the case of a Socialist week held during winter, a meeting was held each evening in school or public hall. They were advertised on the main appeal leaflet and supplemented by a smaller handbill for each meeting distributed the night before in the area where the meeting was to be held.

During the summer weeks, two or three open-air meetings were held *every evening* at regular spots each evening and mentioned on the general leaflet so that 10,000 people knew that they could hear the Socialist case at a given spot any evening during the week.

It was proved conclusively that a regular spot for open-air meetings was more effective than changing the place each night.

Frequent appeals were made from the chairmen inviting members, and capable stewards will find it easy to secure new members, particularly younger people who are seldom indoors when the canvassers call.

If the chairman or speaker draws attention to a certain pamphlet on sale at the meeting, the stewards will find it makes the disposal of them easier.

Literature.

A stock of Party, Trade Union and Socialist League pamphlets have been obtained on sale or return for each Socialist Week, and displayed at the Central Committee room. Where shops have been taken for the week, they are displayed in the windows in the most attractive way possible, and sell quite well. Transport House and the Socialist League will let Parties have these, supplied on sale or return if a guarantee to pay for soiled copies is given and also an assurance that payment will be made at the end of the week's campaign. Over 4,000 pamphlets and papers have been sold during our Socialist Weeks.

Canvassing is the most important job of all. Whether calling on known supporters (as at Peckham and Dulwich) or just calling from door to door in selected streets (as at Brent-

ford and Bristol) we have found a ready response and interest.

The ground was prepared by the general leaflet (copy attached) and the canvassers have found very little rudeness or difficulty.

We have generally canvassed with the aid of the local register pasted on cardboard and marked them "member," "doubtful," "against" or "out."

Many of our canvassers have sold literature to people who have not made up their minds.

Canvassing is the only basis for increased membership apart from the comparative few who will join up at meetings.

Finance.

The cost of Socialist Weeks varies according to the amount of publicity, whether special headquarters are taken and whether an outside organiser is appointed to run it. The cost of a week in the winter season is higher because of indoor meetings.

At Wandsworth, S.E., St. Pancras and S.W. Bethnal Green, Socialist Weeks cost about £20 each and 119, 256 and 201 new members were made, respectively. None of these parties has paid agents. At Brentford and Chiswick, a difficult area with a keen party and voluntary secretary, the week cost £30, and was covered by profit on dance, sale of flags, literature, donations and collection at meetings. At East Bristol, where party members lent their house as district headquarters, the total cost of making 1,022 members was approximately £17, including fares, hospitality and expenses of the Clarion Campaign Organiser.

Where properly organised, a Socialist Week can of itself bring in money, and it is also the kind of work for which Trades Councils, local union branches and individuals will make a grant.

Finally, a Socialist Week shows that the Labour Party is alive, brings out the armchair critic and members to do a job, rekindles enthusiasm in all groups of the party and generally takes advantage of awakening political interest of the general public. It also gives the younger members of the party a special job to do, on rather exciting lines, and attracts more young people to the party membership because of the energy and liveliness displayed.

A New Service for Local Parties

THE SOCIALIST FILM COUNCIL

By DAISY POSTGATE

Some five years or more ago I saw a Zane Grey silent film. It was called "The Desert of Wheat" or some such title, and was about a noble Westerner who broke the efforts of the wicked trade unionists to prevent the crops being reaped. It was rather more noxious and silly than most films, but after all, it was only an exaggeration of the sort of propaganda that the cinema regularly sends out. Consider what is the ideal that Hollywood sets before our eyes. It is always: If you are poor, become rich. The most admirable and enviable situation is to become an employer making a large profit. If you cannot do that, the next best thing is to get a well-paid post, of the white collar type, close to the boss's chair. If you must remain poor, then virtue consists in staying contented, quaint and happy, with a pure woman's love in an old frame house with a rocking chair in the porch. Never once in any film do you find it suggested that to organise with your fellow workers into a union: to stand by them in a strike: to send food to those fighting for their rights as the Co-ops. sent a food ship to the Dublin strikers in 1912; to unite to stop a war or pull down a militarist government heading for a conflict—never do you get it suggested that any of these things might be praiseworthy.

Were any films produced on these lines the British Board of Film Censors would refuse to license them.

The Socialist Film Council is a first attempt to remedy this state of affairs. We make our films on "non-inflammable stock because the censorship is only legally applicable to inflammable film. In one or two places the police have ignored this fact according to our information. But this attitude is unusual and has not occurred in regard to any of our films.

Our first two films, made last year, were silent and were on 16 mm (half-size) stock. They were called "What the News Reel Doesn't Show" and "The Road to Hell." The second was a melodrama of the Means Test. Neither were very ambitious, but they were

well liked, and during last winter were booked up to capacity by Labour Parties, which showed them in local halls without much difficulty. But old age and the handling of amateur operators has brought the end near: they are now too battered to be used.

This year we have made a more ambitious picture — a drama taking an hour and a quarter to show, with sound accompaniment and a certain amount of dialogue. It is called "Blow, Bugles, Blow!" and is a peace film, showing how a Labour movement stopped a war.

As it is printed on "non-flam" it is not censurable. But as few Labour Parties have full-size projectors, it is generally only practicable to show it in cinemas hired for the purpose. Where Sunday opening is not allowed, Sundays are the best days for this: where it is, Sunday afternoons can usually be used. Our idea is that the film (for which we charge £5) should be sandwiched in with spoken propaganda — together with two speakers, say, it would make a full programme. Any further details can be obtained from me at 4, Elm Close, London, N.W.4.

All the acting, directing, camera-work, scenario writing and so on was, of course, voluntary. The film, nevertheless, cost over £1,500, most of which was provided by the Director, Rudolph Messel. The President of the Council is George Lansbury; the Chairman is Raymond Postgate, and I am the Secretary.

ARE YOU GREEDY?

YES, you are if you are a reader who keeps to himself that gold-mine — the L.O.

Please introduce us to new subscribers
WE WANT MORE READERS

THE LITERATURE SECRETARY'S PAGE

REVIEWS.

"A Guide to Modern Politics." By G. D. H. and M. L. Cole. 560 pages. 6s. Victor Gollancz.

However on earth *do* the Coles do it? Everyone asks that question. Here is a book of deep thinking, analytic to the last page, yet unique in its outline and in its presentation. We are taken, in the Coles' attractive style, into the fundamentals and mysteries of modern politics in all the important countries of the world. We are shown the influences which create, maintain, disintegrate, or destroy, the various political systems; and the caustic and cogent comments in the Coles' inimitable style makes the book interesting throughout. Here is a comment which interests us and which appears in a chapter entitled "Political Behaviour."

"This lack of continuous political interest among the main body of the citizens lies at the root of the operation of political systems. These systems, to the extent to which they profess to be democratic, have been built for the most part on the assumption that man is a political animal, who will be prepared to take his politics seriously. Actually, parliamentary systems . . . work as they do because this assumption is unreal. . . . But when the social machine breaks down, the unpolitical majority is largely compelled to line up behind one element or another of the minority. For, as we have seen, nothing so quickly turns the mass of people into political animals as the denial of the means of life." Altogether, there is such keen perception and such brilliant light thrown by this book on the problems of the world to-day that it ought to be read by every political student.

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

"What Labour Has Done For Agriculture." By George Dallas. Price one penny. The Labour Party.

This is a pamphlet which we want for the agricultural areas, for so much credit has been taken by the present Government, and so little was said by Labour supporters about what the Labour Government actually did, attempted or begun, during their term of office, that an altogether wrong conception prevails on the countryside. Mr. Dallas has done a service to the Movement by this pamphlet, and has placed in the hands of Local Parties a pamphlet which is an armoury in itself. Furthermore, it is attractively got up, and being priced at the nimble penny it should sell by the hundred in country districts. 100 copies cost 6s.

"The Economic Planning of Agriculture." By the Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps. Price one penny. The Labour Party.

This is a pamphlet which, as its title indicates, stands in an altogether different category to that above-mentioned. It is one for the townsman as well as the countryman, and though it is somewhat general most agricultural problems are dealt with, and Labour's general policy thereto is indicated. Labour's proposals and approach to agricultural questions are by no means so well understood or thought about, as they ought to be, and this pamphlet is one of the means to understanding. 100 copies cost 6s.

"Local Government Speakers' Handbook." By the Labour Party Research Department. Price sixpence. The Labour Party.

The new edition of the Local Government Speakers' Handbook has been brought up-to-date in respect of all its data, and references to recent legislation are contained therein. The Handbook is an authoritative and concise armoury of facts, and on the information contained herein no end of well-informed election speeches or leaflets might be based. No Town Councillor, candidate or Party exponent ought to miss his Local Government Speakers' Handbook. Nor,

THE LITERATURE SECRETARY'S PAGE

indeed, should they have to buy them, for Local Parties would be well-advised to buy a dozen or so for the education and information of their Councillors and principal people.

"London Under Socialist Rule."

By the Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison. Price one penny. The Labour Party.

This pamphlet, which we know is the first of a series of statements which the future holds in store showing how Socialists govern the greatest city in the world, is a story of what Labour has done, and is doing, on the London County Council. The pamphlet, of course, has a special appeal to Londoners, for it is a magnificent story and well told, and the pamphlet is well got up. But though we had "... Years of Labour Rule in Sheffield"; another story from Glamorgan; and now "Twelve Years of Labour Rule in Bermondsey," our literature regarding Labour's accomplishments on Local Governing bodies is altogether scanty. We want more pamphlets like this, and perhaps the popularity of the publication under notice, and of the others we have mentioned, will prompt them. The heavens have not fallen because of Socialist rule in London, nor anywhere else, but the bogey of fear is still trotted out in every part of the country against Labour candidates. Let us push these sort of stories for all we are worth. For they do our brothers credit.

"Who Backs Mosley?" Price sixpence. Labour Research Department, 60 Doughty Street, London, W.C.1.

We are afraid that this pamphlet does not justify its title, for although it gives us some interesting additional information regarding Sir Oswald Mosley, it does not, later on, live up to the promise it gives, and is dear at sixpence. To those who collect anti-Fascist literature and therefore would buy this pamphlet, we suggest that one chapter in which certain names are given is at least misleading, and not at all fair to the persons whose names are mentioned, and who have no connection whatever, and never did have, with the Fascist Movement.

"United Against Fascism." Price one penny. Trades Union Congress.

This pamphlet is a reprint of the speech on Fascism by Mr. Walter Citrine at the Weymouth Congress. It contains also the composite resolution regarding Fascism which was endorsed by the Labour Party Conference, and the statement on Fascism issued by the National Council of Labour. This pamphlet is a necessary document for Labour speakers.

**The L.O. wants
1,000 NEW READERS**

Will you help?

**"TWELVE YEARS OF LABOUR
RULE."**

We are grateful to our comrades of Bermondsey, who have just published a brochure under the above title, and which is offered to our friends in other parts of the country at the price of a single copy threepence, or for quantities, as advertised in another part of this issue.

As we remark elsewhere, Party literature concerning Labour's accomplishments in office is very scanty, yet Labour candidates constantly have to meet the charge that Labour cannot govern, and that when they do they are hopeless failures. Well, here is a story brilliantly told in exact detail with heaps of illustrations and contrasts, which is a wonderful vindication of Labour's claims. Those who knew the Bermondsey that was and see the pictures of to-day, almost want to go and live there. We offer tribute to that admirable band of Socialists who have accomplished so much in twelve years. It prompts the question, what could we not do with twelve years of power in Parliament?

We anticipate that this pamphlet will soon be sold out. Get your copies now, for this book will become a Labour classic. At any rate, if well distributed and displayed throughout the country it will prove a first-class aid in giving others the opportunity to emulate what has been done in Bermondsey.

JACK CUTTER—

DESCRIBES THE CONFERENCE

"Impressions of Southport Conference" has appeared as a headline in about fifty local Labour journals, twenty Union journals and half a dozen of the organs of Socialist Societies, but they are all inferior to this one. This is the original "Impressions" article for it is written before any of the others. In fact it is written before the Southport Conference of the Labour Party has opened. Indeed, it has nothing to say about the Labour Party Conference, but deals with the more important Southport Conference of Labour Agents.

From the weltering mass of "Southport Impressions" articles select this as the original and only authentic one. Refuse all imitations. None genuine without the name "Jack Cutter" on label.

It was the crispest, briskest, briefest—and dullest—Annual Conference of Labour Agents I can remember. Two and three-quarter hours precisely sufficed to dispose of an agenda which promised speeches of sparkling interest, shrewd thrusts and caustic comment.

There *were* speeches which embodied all three of these qualities but they were made from the platform and not from the floor. They were made by our General Secretary who, on top of his form, supplied the sparkling interest in his concise and altogether admirable statement on the pensions scheme; and supplied the shrewd thrusts and caustic comment at our expense by pouring scorn on our failure to submit questions for the consultation with our departmental chiefs.

The Executive were triumphantly vindicated and had everything their own way from start to finish. Indeed they deserved this treatment, for they have done an excellent year's work and presented a report which was well-nigh impossible to criticise.

This is an achievement of some note, for Labour Agents know what criticism is. They are case-hardened to receiving it from all and sundry and the only chance in the whole year they have to criticise somebody else is at their own Conference. Who can blame them, then, if they make a

field-day on that occasion? Their close season is so long.

At Southport, however, we had scant opportunity. The London District (past masters in the sport) struggled manfully via Shafran and Douglas, but their handicap was too great. Their guns were spiked and their thunder stolen. The E.C. got in first, answered their points in the E.C. Report, and walked away with the verdict and a three to one majority.

If you want to know what our Annual Conference decided read your E.C. Report and you will find it all there. We decided nothing else whatever. If you think this a poor result, read the Report again and call it a darn good morning's work.

So much for the Agenda—now for the points of interest apart from the Agenda. There were more women this year than I remember having seen at any previous Conference—a good sign.

Only one of them entered into debate and that was to make a practical and helpful suggestion—a better sign.

My friend and colleague, A. J. Heal, was present, and said nothing at all—an astonishing fact.

The Conference commenced precisely at the scheduled time; there were practically no late-comers and nearly everyone was present ten minutes before the Chairman rose—a still more astonishing fact.

The Chairman's address lasted exactly one and a half minutes—a record.

The old myth that a Labour Agent's job is No. 1 on the list of dangerous occupations was exploded to smithereens by the Secretary's interesting analysis of service figures showing that most of our members have been agents for very long periods.

On this point I am not surprised. I have come to the conclusion that our job can't be so bad after all. I have been coming to Agents' Conferences for many years and each year I am struck afresh with the fact that we all look exactly as young as we did ten years ago. It must be fifteen years since I first met Wilf. Whiteley in the old I.L.P., and, dash it, the man looks younger now than he did then!

Each year Claude Denscombe presents the same imperturbable appearance, Dan Dawson the same air of rugged approval of all that is sound and sane; Councillor Barefoot the same atmosphere of austere efficiency; Joe Foster the same front of quiet comradeship, and as for our General Secretary, it is true that last year he was a very sick man, but here he is again, more full of beans than ever and I swear looking not a day older than he did ten years ago.

It would be a real effort to imagine Jack Cape without his genial smile; George Shepherd when his expansive front elevation was adorned with flowing locks; Eastwood before he mastered the art of apt comment and Shafran before he learned the value of tireless persistence. A more changeless group of men and women surely doesn't exist. I must see my life insurance people about it with a view to a premium reduction and I give a hint to the General Secretary that if he wants to convince the actuaries that for the purposes of a superannuation scheme we are a good risk, he should show them group photos of us ten years ago and to-day and defy them to tell which is which.

Our Southport Conference may not be remembered as one of the most brilliant, but if the E.C. feel (as they have every right) that it is one of the most useful and constructive I could not criticise their finding. Speeches were few, but only because those of us who didn't speak were convinced that those who did adequately said all there was to say. I write this before the Party Conference begins and hope we can make a similar observation there too.

I hae ma doots though, I hae ma doots.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILLORS ELECTION RULES.

As announced in our September issue a Statutory Order amending the present Election Rules in minor respects came into force last month. The rules are published as S.R. & O. 1934. No. 963. Price twopence.

The amended rules are as follow:—

1. The following Rule shall be inserted after Rule 4 of the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931:—

4A. A person shall not be validly

nominated unless his consent to nomination given in writing on or within one month before the last day for the delivery of nomination papers and attested by one witness is delivered, in accordance with sections 31 (5) and 34 of the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1934, at the place and within the time appointed for the delivery of nomination papers:

Provided that in the case of an election to fill a casual vacancy if the Returning Officer is satisfied that owing to the absence of a person from the United Kingdom it has not been reasonably practicable for his consent in writing to be given as aforesaid, a telegram consenting to his nomination and purporting to have been sent by him shall be deemed, for the purpose of this Rule, to be consent in writing given by him on the day on which it purports to have been sent and attestation of his consent shall not be required.

2. The following Rule shall be substituted for Rule 6 of the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931:—

6.—(1) The Returning Officer shall number the nomination papers in the order in which they are received by him; and the first valid nomination paper received for a candidate shall be deemed to be the nomination of that candidate.

(2) As soon as may be after the time for the delivery of nomination papers has expired, the Returning Officer shall examine the nomination papers, and decide whether the candidates have been validly nominated in accordance with the provisions of these Rules.

(3) Where the Returning Officer decides that a candidate has been so validly nominated, his decision shall be final and shall not be questioned in any proceedings whatsoever.

(4) Where the Returning Officer decides that a candidate has not been so validly nominated, he shall endorse and sign on the nomination paper the fact and reasons for his decision.

(5) The decision of the Returning Officer under the last preceding paragraph shall be subject to review on an election petition questioning the election.

(6) Not later than the day described for that purpose by the First Schedule to these Rules, the Returning Officer shall send notice of his decision to each candidate at his place of abode as stated on his nomination paper.

3. The following Rule shall be substituted for Rule 7 of the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931:—

7. Not later than the day prescribed for that purpose by the First Schedule to these Rules, the Returning Officer shall prepare a statement in the Form No. 3 in the Second Schedule to these Rules, or in a form to the like effect, containing the names of all persons nominated for the several Wards and their places of abode and descriptions and his decision whether those persons have been validly nominated, and shall publish the statement by causing it to be affixed on or near to the principal external gate or door of the Offices of the Council.

4. In paragraph (1) of Rule 23 of the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931, there shall be deleted the words "acceptance of office, resignation, re-eligibility of holders of office, and" and also the words "or deemed to be re-elected".

5. The following Rule shall be inserted after Rule 30 of the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931:—

30A. A declaration of acceptance of office by the Mayor or an Alderman or a Councillor of a Metropolitan Borough shall be in the Form in the Sixth Schedule to these Rules, or in a form to the like effect.

6. This Rule prescribes the Form for Notice of Election.—[Ed. "L.O."]

7. The following Schedule shall be substituted for the Fifth Schedule to the Metropolitan Borough Councillors Election Rules, 1931:—

These provisions are here omitted, as the changes are merely verbal, except that vacancies arising from non-acceptance of office, or failure to attend meetings will occur by declaration of the Council, and may not be notified by two councillors. — [Ed. "L.O."]

8. This rule prescribes the declaration of acceptance of office. — [Ed. "L.O."]

WHAT WE'VE GOT

Of course we hold, and November 1st will make it more! The following list of Labour Councils (corrected to September, 1934) is extracted from "The Local Government Speakers' Handbook, reviewed on page 192 of this issue.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

County Councils (4)

Durham
Glamorgan
London
Monmouth

County Borough Councils (15)

Barnsley
Barrow-in-Furness
Bootle
East Ham
Leeds
Lincoln
Merthyr Tydfil
Norwich
Oldham
Rotherham
St. Helens
Sheffield
Swansea
West Ham
Wigan

Non-County Borough Councils (11)

Barking
Blyth
Ilkeston
Crewe
Mansfield
Neath
Nelson
Port Talbot
Thornaby-on-Tees
Wallsend-on-Tyne
Walthamstow
Wednesbury
Whitehaven
Willesden
Workington

Metropolitan Borough Councils (4)

Bermondsey
Deptford
Greenwich
Poplar

District Councils

Over 100

SCOTLAND.

Glasgow*
Cowdenbeath
Cumnock
Dalkeith*
Dunfermline
Greenock
Kilsyth
Tranent

*Virtual, but not absolute majority.